

REMARKS OF J. STROM THURMOND, GOVERNOR
OF SOUTH CAROLINA, ON "MOTHER'S DAY"
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Bethel Methodist Church

I know every South Carolinian will wholeheartedly
concur in the selection of Mrs. Creech as the State Mother
for 1949. Her life has exemplified the ideals that we
associate with Mother's Day, and it is fitting that we should
honor her as a symbol of the South Carolina mother.

One of the things I like best about the American
way of life is the fact that throughout our nation's history
we have always cherished the ideal of reverence for the
influence of mother. Nearly all of our nation's leaders have
admitted their great debts to the love and teachings of their
mothers.

Today, it is difficult to imagine how much our
democracy owes to the mothers who shaped and fashioned the
lives of our great men. The mother of George Washington,
for instance, was a woman of extraordinary ability who handled
her responsibilities with such success that her children grew
up to reflect honor upon themselves and upon their mother.
Lincoln said: "All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my
angel mother." Thomas Edison, whose influence is still felt

*Original manuscript used in delivering
this address. J. Strom Thurmond
Governor*

by every one of us every day, said his success was due to a mother who believed in him when no one else did. It is much the same in thousands of other successful lives.

I think the typical American citizen has an unchanging and undying respect for the ideals his mother taught him. Few men sink so low in life that they do not feel a twinge of regret if they have not lived up to their mothers' expectations. And few men rise so high that they accomplish more than their mothers had hoped they would.

There are times in all our lives when ambition is at a low ebb, when our spirits are feeble and wavering, when we despair of success. At such a time, more often than not, our memories recall the love and devotion of mother. We remember her words, the kindness that shown from her face, and the faith upon which she leaned as though it were solid rock. And we draw upon that memory as a bottomless well of hope and determination, turning again to the tasks of life with renewed energy and self-respect.

As a usual thing, we must travel a long way in life before we come to a true realization of what mother accomplished. Often the child may be unaware of the sacrifices

his mother finds it necessary to make for him. But in later life, most of us at last reach a full understanding of the depth and richness of her love.

And on Mother's Day, whether to her memory or to mother in person, we can say with the poet:

You painted no Madonnas
On chapel walls in Rome;
But with a love diviner,
You lived one in your home.

You wrote no lofty poems
that critics counted art;
But with a nobler vision,
You lived them in your heart.

You carved no shapeless marble
To some high-flown design;
But with a finer sculpture,
You shaped this soul of mine.

You built no great cathedrals
That centuries applaud;
But with enduring artistry,
Your life cathedraled God.